CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

REVIEW

Of a book, entitled "LECTURES ON UNIVERSALISM:" *By* JOEL PARKER, *Pastor of the third Presbyterian Church, Rochester.* "*Buy the truth and sell it not.*" Printed at Rochester by Elisha Loomis—pp. 126 12 mo.

(*Concluded from page* 58.)

I should have finished my remarks on this book before this, but for a desire to expose the rank Pharisaism which is its characteristic feature. In p. 81, Mr. P. assumes the fact, that "That system, which maintains the doctrine of *eternal punishment*, often reclaims men from *vicious habits*, and from a life of sin; but Universalism does not." To this I reply, the Scriptures inform us, that the *goodness of God leadeth to repentance.* Also, that *Christ is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins.* Now it is certain, that the Bible is wrong, or else Mr. P. is mistaken. For the two propositions can by no possible rule of construction be made a synonyma. I have not counted, but I believe I may venture the assertion, that Mr. P.'s little book contains more threatening denunciations than can be found in the preaching of Christ and his disciples and apostles put together, and of quite a different kind, too. It is a little remarkable that Paul should not so much as once make use of the word *hell*, in all his epistles, and that Mr. P. should be so much more faithful than Paul.

This Mr. P. is a very knowing man. Where he obtained all his knowledge of Universalists I cannot conceive, unless he has the all-pervading eye of the Deity. It is wonderful that this man should know so much of *other people*, and so little of *himself*, as is manifest from a perusal of his book. If a belief in his hell is so purifying, how happens it that he perverts the Scriptures in the wicked manner he has done? How can he slander Universalists in such a barefaced manner? How tell so many tough stories in his book? He says, he has "*often seen* individuals who have been *zealous* Universalists, converted to the belief of the opposite system, and on this change taking place, we have seen a happy change in their lives." And then follows an account of the process of becoming a Universalist. How is it?—"The process is commonly *something* like this—first they give up secret prayer, then family prayer, then leave the communion table, then fall into some vices, and then become Universalists." Your language, Sir, is vague, although your slanderous intention is sufficiently visible. "Commonly *something* like this." Why, Sir, you are *something* like a horse. A horse has legs; so have you. I forbear. When you descend to downright scurrility, I must leave you. Many of your assertions carry their refutation on the face of them.

In p. 84, is found the following round assertion. "*That system, which holds the doctrine of eternal punishment, never occasions distress in a dying hour; but Universalism frequently leads to the most distressing apprehensions on a death-bed.*" And this declaration is made in the very teeth of the notorious fact, that hundreds have within a short period taken refuge in *suicide*, to escape from the distress, and agonizing wretchedness of the very system this man eulogizes. Mothers, distracted with this abominable system, murder their infant children, to save them from the horrible contingent of a mature age, and the dreadful accountability of the sins of riper years! And this man has the unblushing audacity to affront the light of heaven with his statement, in defiance of truth, reason, observation, facts, and the experience of thousands. He also asserts, that "Universalists *often* lament that they ever knew the doctrine." Pray, Sir, how have you learned this? You assert p. 86, that you "have attended the death bed of four avowed Universalists." You say that *one* of them, "immediately on becoming dangerously ill, *denied* that he had ever really believed the doctrine." Another of them "seemed altogether insensible to the subject." And your account of two out of the four, is too ambiguous for me to understand it.

I am of opinion that my knowledge of, and intercourse with Universalists throughout the United States since, and even before Mr. P. appeared upon the stage of action, must have been far greater than his; and my opportunities for obtaining correct information corresponding thereto; and I have no hesitation in declaring, that my knowledge and experience has enabled me to contradict his statements in the most unqualified manner. I have never known so much as one solitary instance, of any person, who I considered sane, who ever, after having his or her understanding enlightened to see and believe the doctrine that "God is the Savior of all men," abjured that faith, in health, or in sickness, and returned to the soul-withering doctrine of endless misery. I have witnessed the closing scene, the death bed of the believer of this faith, and I will add, "Let my last end be like his." Every candid man, possessing common sense, must acknowledge, that a man's condition or state of mind at death, is rather an evidence of his *sincerity*, than of the *truth* of the doctrine he professes. And in my opinion, the poor heart-broken sufferer, who is driven to suicide by the dogmas of orthodoxy, gives a far greater evidence of a sincere belief in that doctrine, than the neat and trim prelate, who dashes away in his pulpit to the tune of two or three thousand a year.

In lecture V. p. 91, we have the following position, "That there are good reasons for *thinking* that no other penalty to the divine law could produce so much holiness and *happiness* in the Universe as *eternal punishment.*" In this position, Mr. P. has only good reasons for *thinking*, &c. I have good reasons for thinking the reverse, and here they are. I learn from the Scriptures, that it is not the *penalty* of the law, which is *death*, which shall produce holiness, and consequent happiness. Take the case and experience of Paul. Paul says, that he *died*—he received the penalty. But, says Paul, (Titus ii. 3, 4.) We ourselves also were disobedient, &c., but after that the *kindness* and *love* of God our Savior toward man appeared, &c. Reader, I pray you to read, and understand this passage, if you never have before. What says Paul? Why, after—after what? After the fear of an endless hell alarmed me—after the penalty of the law stared me in the face, and filled my soul with terrors—No! After that the *kindness*, and *love* of, who? Why, God our *Savior*, mark well the word—our *Savior*, toward *me*, No! Toward *man*, in the aggregate, appeared, then, I Paul, believed, and rejoiced. Hear Paul again, the same book, chap. ii. 11, 12, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, [this is the correct translation,] teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." I ask, is this the imagined *penalty*, of the law producing holiness in Paul, and teaching him? No! The grace, the *favor* of that God, who is the savior of mankind universally! How triumphant is truth! How miserable the subterfuges of the enemies of truth! What a monstrous absurdity, that more holiness and happiness would be produced, by a part of mankind continuing endlessly unholy, and unhappy, than by making all holy, and happy! "Lord, what is man!"

In p. 92, Mr. P. expresses his doubts "whether it were possible, in the nature of things, to reclaim *one* sinner from his wanderings, unless he had been condemned to *endless punishment.*" You must except Paul, Sir, there is no such thing in nature, as catching Paul in your orthodox trap. There is a way, Sir, to get by all the difficulty, that you never so much as dreamed of. It is this. Instead of tormenting men eternally, by the *penalty* of the law, to write the law in their hearts, and in their minds, and then they will be holy, and consequently happy. I refer you to Heb. viii. 7—11, for proof that it shall be done; and also for proof, that the first covenant, the law, was insufficient. Yes, Sir, this very law, on which you place so much reliance, is there represented to be insufficient, and the declaration is, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith a new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth, and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Yes, Sir, and *your penalty vanishes with it!!! Hallelujah!*

In p. 93, Mr. P. let the *secret* out. He says, "*We know not.*" All at once, Samson like, he is shorn of his omniscience, and says, "We know not." And reader, what can it be, think you, that this very knowing man does not know? I will inform you, he does *not* know, but that, in order to keep his saints peaceable in heaven, and preserve them from *actual rebellion*, that it will be necessary to keep hell constantly burning before their eyes. Well, on the whole, I think it is a bright idea. For with such saints, as he is going to people his heaven with, saints who were first converted by being terrified with stories about hell and the devil, they would actually face about, as soon as they discovered that the danger was all over. Indeed, it is a common saying among many orthodox christians, that if they knew there was *no hell*, they would sin without restraint. I think, Sir, this is the most consistent part of your book—it looks reasonable, that if you destroy your hell, your saints will all run out of your heaven.

There is one thing more, that Mr. P. don't know. He says, p. 93, "We know not the comparative magnitude of the prison of *hell.*" Really, Sir, you ought to know this much, for almost at your first stand, you could certainly *see future* punishment coming. Don't you think, Sir, on the whole, and after reflection, that you don't exactly *see future* punishment coming? or at most, that you may be a little mistaken about the magnitude of it? You acknowledge you do not exactly know the *size* of hell, but we have your opinion, that may be valuable, aldn

will copy it, for the information of my readers. You say, "It may bear a *proportion* to all the moral intelligences of Jehovah's empire, not unlike a *country jail* to the inhabitants of the world, at the present time. And if so, it might be difficult to prove, that any other penalty, than that of eternal punishment, should admit of so small an amount of suffering, as the present system." To which I reply, that I am of opinion that the difficulty is not so great as Mr. P. may imagine. The intention of the future punishment in Mr. P.'s hell, is declared by him to be, "by the power of *moral* means;—by motives drawn from the *character of God*, and the nature of his government." Mr. P. declares, "Yet it is by no means certain that they would be secured, unless this gratitude arose from a deliverance from eternal punishment, and unless this gratitude were *kept alive* by a constant example of some who were justly suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." I have already confessed that there is reason in this part of Mr. P.'s plan, considering the refractory character of his saints; who, in the first instance, became saints, not because they hated sin, and loved holiness, but for the reason that they were afraid of hell. But I cannot help admiring Mr. P.'s phraseology. He finally uses the phrases, "*character of God*," and "*eternal fire*," or *hell-fire*, as convertible terms, if not synonymous, and gets into a complete orthodox jumble. It appears to me, that if Mr. P. would reduce the dimensions of his hell, to the size of a *cage*, sufficiently large to hold *one* of his *saints*, and occasionally, as symptoms of a refractory disposition should be manifested, give them, in rotation, a *taste* of hell itself, that they would then *draw their motives to obedience from the very fountain head of orthodoxy*. This would lessen the amount of suffering, and the argument against rebellion, would be carried home to his saints' business and bosoms! I merely offer this, for Mr. P.'s consideration.

I cannot help thinking of what Mr. P. says in his last lecture, p. 123, where he expresses his conviction that the danger of going to hell is extreme, and that not more than *one* in *five* of the impenitent in this age, will escape it. And he expressed this opinion, after that he had reduced the magnitude of his hell, as above mentioned. Why, Sir, you are the most unreasonable man I have ever yet met with. You will not annihilate sinners—you will not admit them into your heaven—and finally, you reduce your hell so *small*, that not one in a thousand of them can even get their heads into it. Sir, you do not possess one spark of hospitality.

Again, there is another idea that Mr. P.'s logic has suggested. He says, or assigns as a reason, for keeping his hell constantly burning in *sight* of his saints, that "It is necessary, to the very *principles of their being*, that they should be kept, if at all, by the power of *moral means*;" that is, by *hell-fire*. I think I take his idea perfectly, and it is this:—They became Christians, in the first instance, by the operation of the *fear of hell*;—nothing short of keeping up this fear, will *keep* them Christians; consequently, the conclusion is both reasonable, and logical, that the fear of hell-fire is interwoven with the "very *principles of their being*." To make it still more plain. It is an axiom in Medical Science, that there is a total renovation of animal stamina once in about seven years; and a revival at such times, of that *idiosyncrasy*, which is a peculiar and distinguishing characteristic, in the temperaments of certain persons. When, therefore, Mr. P.'s saints have the fear of hell interwoven with "the very *principles of their being*," they undergo a sort of orthodox renovation; and as their refractory and rebellious dispositions require a constant stimulus to be applied to keep them within the bounds of decency, they are continually undergoing a renovation of the *orthodox idiosyncrasy* through the *moral influence* of *hell-fire!* This is the only perfectly consistent proposition advanced by Mr. P. in his six lectures. It is perfectly correct. It will stand the test of all the rules of logic. You may ransack the Roman Vatican.—You may search the orations of Demosthenes, and Cicero, and you cannot find a sounder argument.

But one idea more is suggested. It is this:—In Lecture 3d, as I have already stated, Mr. P. chooses the *vilest* sinners, for his saints, and denounces "the most unexceptionable *moralist*, who is yet destitute of true piety," that is, a fear of hell-fire; and declares "that he cannot escape the damnation of hell." But in p. 51, we find this same Mr. P. contending for a *moral* government. He says, "If we were destitute of all perceived *moral* relations, and *moral precepts*, we could never possess the *least idea of authority, or obligation, or ill desert.*" Why Mr. P., you have fairly outdone yourself. First, you select the *vilest* of the human race to people your heaven with. Next, you send all "unexceptionable *moral*" men to your *hell*. Then, to cap the climax of all absurdity ever yet heard, read, or sung, you find yourself in such a dilemma, that you have to *go to hell for moral precepts to govern heaven with!!!*

What a man, is this Mr. P.! and what a book is this Mr. P.'s book! I supposed when I first sat me down, to review this book, that it was a work of only ordinary merit; and accordingly advertised the reader in accordance with that opinion. But, as I have progressed, I have discovered that it contains new ideas—ingenious speculations—profound thoughts—most admirable positions—and arguments and conclusions, that I can find no language to characterize. It will give celebrity to the author of it; at least I shall try to aid it. It will acquire a *reputation*, for the writer of it, of a *peculiar* kind; and may, in process of time, transcend the history of the Salem Witchcraft!

But there is yet another idea suggested by reading this wonderful book. It is this. In p. 91, Mr. P. defines sin to be "a transgression of the law of God;" and says, "This law is the great instrument of government, and of happiness to the Kingdom of Jehovah. Its design is to maintain subjection to the Ruler of the Universe, and thus to diffuse and sustain a *perfect harmony* through all the *relations* of created intelligences. What then, is the guilt of sin? It despises all this good." Why Mr. P.! you select the enemies to all order and harmony, and fear, to people heaven with. You then select the unexceptionable moral men, the lovers of subjection to good government, the friends of harmony, and fear, to send to hell. It certainly looks, as though your system, in order to preserve harmony, had adopted the conclusion, that peaceable, and unexceptionable moral men, would conduct with propriety any where; and so you send them to hell. And then, to dispose of the immoral and refractory, you are compelled to locate them in your heaven, contrary to their deserts, and keep hell burning before their eyes, to preserve even a decency of conduct and appearances. Pray, Sir, have you not concluded, that, if you should send your vile saints to hell, they would conduct in such a violent, and riotous manner, there would be no such thing as enduring them?

In p. 97, we read as follows: "*Far the greater share of those who pretend to be disciples of Christ, acknowledge that they deserve an endless punishment.*" O, Sir, you cannot conceive, how highly I appreciate the propriety of your choice of terms, when you attempt to express the *peculiar* traits of character of your *bona fide* orthodox Christians! Those who *pretend to be* disciples of Christ! Yes, Sir, I agree with you perfectly; that the *vilest sinners*, whom a fear of your hell, and endless punishment, has alarmed, and who need a hell to be constantly burning before them, to keep them from actual rebellion, only *pretend* to be disciples of Christ. This too, is a logical conclusion. I feel myself bound, reader, to praise, when I can, the positions advanced by Mr. P. But an idea is suggested.

Mr. P.'s christians, after they have been made as honest, and as sincere, as such characters are susceptible of, declare, that they *deserve* an endless punishment. Now one of two alternatives must be admitted. These pretended christians either declare a falsehood or a truth. If, after they have become christians, they *then* deserve endless punishment, I am led to the conclusion, that *before* their conversion they deserved something more; and, as I have before stated, the dilemna required that they should be disposed of as Mr. P. has determined. Before they were converted, they deserved more than an endless punishment. Now, they deserve just exactly that, and nothing better, and nothing worse.

Reader, I ask you a question. I ask it soberly. I ask it solemnly. If these men, whom Mr. P. characterizes as *pretended* disciples of Christ, actually *deserve* endless punishment, and God will, as the Scriptures declare, "render unto every man *according to his works*," how can these pretended christians *escape their just deserts?*

Reader, I ask you another question; and I ask it solemnly. Paul, the chosen ambassador of Christ to the Gentiles, declares, in the most unequivocal language, that there is "*now no condemnation* to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*" (Rom. viii. 1, 2.) Therefore is not a criterion established by Paul, that if a man actually deserves endless punishment, he is under the *law of sin and death*, and is not in Christ Jesus, to walk after the Spirit? And I conclude, that the bare declaration of a man, that he deserves endless punishment, is irrefragable proof, that he is not Christ's disciple; for the conclusive reason, that Christ's disciples deserve no such punishment; and if a disciple of Christ, should make such an assertion, he would contradict the Gospel of Christ, he would declare a falsehood!

Reader, "Hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil." (Eccles. xii. 13, 14.) See Isa. i. 27.

H. F.

FROM THE GOSPEL ANCHOR.

ON THE "WORD," OR "LOGOS."

"*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*"

We are requested by a friend, to offer some remarks on this introduction to the gospel of John.—In complying with this request, we would direct the attention of the reader to the following particulars.

1. The word which is rendered *word*, has in the New Testament, above *thirty* distinct significations. Among others, it signifies power, wisdom and reason.

2. It must be remembered that it is of the masculine gender, and therefore, when it is said that "all things were made by *him*," that *him* refers to the *word*; and unless we admit that a *personification* has been used, it would read, all things were made by *it*.

3. Personification is a common thing in scripture. Thus we read, "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word which I have spoken, *the same shall judge him* in the last day." Here the *word*

is made a *judge*. Personal properties are attributed to the word of God. Thus, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made"—"His word runneth very swiftly."

4. If then, we suppose this *word* to be some inherent property of the Deity—some quality or qualities, which have always resided in him, by which he created all things, and by which he still manifests himself in his works, it is unimportant that we should know the real meaning of the *logos*, or *word*. If we should say that the *word*, denoted the *power* of the Deity, acting under the guidance of his *wisdom*, we should perhaps, not deviate far from the true meaning.

5. With this signification of the term, the interpretation of the first part of John's gospel is natural and easy. "In the beginning was the *Word*, and the Word was with God."—That is, the power of God, aided in its operations by divine wisdom, has been with God from the beginning. It is not a *being*, which emanated from the Deity, or which exists in a separate state from him. "And the Word was God."—The qualities of the Deity denoted by the *Logos*, or *Word*, are essential to his character as God, and not to be considered as constituting any other being. "All things were *made by him*."—That is, by this *Word*, or the energies of this wisdom, were all things originally made.

6. "The Word was made flesh." We give the language of professor Norton, on this passage.—"This seems to us no very harsh figure to denote what we believe to have been intended—that the divine power was manifested in a human form, through Jesus Christ. But if there should seem to be any difficulty in this expression, it may assist our conception to know, that according to a common use of the term logos, it might be applied to any being, through whom the divine power was strikingly manifested. Thus Philo calls Moses *the divine Logos*, and the High Priest *a Logos*."

Dr. Priestly thus remarks on this passage.—"This divine light was so eminently displayed in Christ that it may be said, that the Logos or the divine wisdom and power, appeared in a human form, so that being invisible, as it necessarily is in the divine being himself, whose attribute it is, it became the object of our senses."

For an able article on this subject, we refer the reader to the Unitarian Miscellany, Vol. 1, No. 8.—We acknowledge our debt to it, for the arguments contained in the above remarks. Any treatise on the opinions of the Unitarians, will furnish comments on this portion of scripture. *Yates' Vindication*, is a work to which we can refer those who are curious on this subject, as an able and candid production.—L.

FROM THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

"NEITHER COLD NOR HOT."

That there are many Universalists whose characters are pretty well described in the above declaration to the Laodiceans, we have but little reason to doubt. We do positively know men, who tell us privately, that Universalism is the doctrine of the Bible, and that they believe it true; but who in fact, are of as little advantage to it, as the fifth wheel of a coach. They are men of such sterling sense and independent minds, that they are perfectly *ashamed*, to have the Universalists think them believers in endless misery; but on the other hand, they set so much by their popularity, as to sacrifice at her shrine, the noble, dignified principle of independent action. We believe there are many of this description in almost every town in this part of the country.

They are "neither cold nor hot." They are very glad to hear that the doctrine of a world's salvation, is rapidly spreading, and rejoice that its advocates have been able to produce so favorable an aspect, in the affairs of the religious community. But what have they done to aid in accomplishing this important work? Of a vast many it might be said, *nothing*. But of a still greater number we have a different story to tell. They are those who, not satisfied with neglecting the cause of truth, lend their influence, and apply their means, to the support of that which they pretend to believe is absolutely *false*.

It is true they have excuses for the course they pursue. They do not exactly pretend that they have "oxen" or "a farm" to attend to; but they have married wives, and "*therefore*" they must please *them*; at least that is the situation of many. But the question is, whether on this account, they are justified in an entire neglect of the gospel of glad tidings to all people. Are they under any obligations to virtually deny the "Lord that bought them," for the sake of keeping peace at home? We do not believe it right for a man to deny his "better half" the privilege of going to meeting *where* she pleases, or of contributing her mite in support of the doctrine she believes to be true. But while he should peaceably yield this right to her, he should reserve the same for himself, and exercise it, in supporting the doctrine *he* believes to be true.

We are no advocates for tyrannical measures in this matter; but for perfect freedom on both sides. And we think it no credit to either party to acknowledge, either directly or indirectly, a slavish submission to the will of the other. Let both do as they please; for the liberty of one is certainly consistent with the liberty of the other. And, henceforth, let no one excuse himself by saying he wishes to keep peace in his family; for if he be unfortunately yoked with an unbeliever, let him do at least *as much* to support truth as he does error.

Again. There are others, whom we know to be Universalists, who use their means to support the doctrine of endless misery, because as they say, they wish to keep up society. They tell us that the preacher in their parish, is a pretty liberal sort of a man; that he preaches good moral discourses, and seldom touches "upon any doctrinal points." That his friends would be unable to support him, and rather than not have preaching, they unite and all go to one meeting.

If it were necessary, we could mention some places where this representation would apply; where there are considerable bodies of Universalists, who do not take a stand in favor of their sentiments, because, their preacher seldom deals in fiery doctrines, etc. These reasons, at first sight, may appear plausible enough; but let us examine them.

If these Universalists are really such at heart, they would like once in a while to hear their doctrine preached. Then let them propose to their minister, who is such a *liberal* man, to exchange with some Universalist preacher. Would he do it? No; they themselves do not believe he would. How much satisfaction, then, must they take in hearing a good moral discourse from a man who would prevent their hearing the doctrine they believed, if he could!

It is in vain, brethren, for you to undertake to unite the doctrine of eternal damnation with that of Universal Salvation; there is no affinity between them. The former has been the cause of more persecution, and perhaps of blood-shed, than all other causes put together; and the generality of its advocates have manifested the most implacable enmity to the cause you pretend to espouse. If you think them liberal and friendly to you, prove it by enjoying your rights.

You say your minister is old, and you hear and support him from a principle of friendship, and respect to his age. But do tell me, if he is older, or more to be respected than the *truth*. Brethren, do not have "men's *persons* in admiration."

You think you are too few in number, to form a society. But remember the assurance that "where *two or three* are gathered together in my name there will I be in the midst of them." You say you should be unable to procure preaching, even if you were united in a body. But do you expect to lessen the difficulty, by paying the little you can spare to a man whom you consider a *false* teacher?

Brethren, suffer a word of exhortation;—do not put your candle under a bushel, but let it shine before men, and let us see you either cold or hot. If you are ashamed of the gospel, abandon it. If not, I beseech you come forward, with the sword of the spirit which is the word of God, and act in its defence. J. B.

FROM THE VERMONT PATRIOT.

FOUR DAYS MEETINGS.

We conceive it the duty of the Editor of a public Journal, to expose hypocrisy in every shape, and correct the many errors into which mankind are daily falling. We have heretofore said but little in regard to the effects of Four Days meetings.—We wished to remain silent until we became perfectly convinced of their good or bad effect; and we believe we have now sufficient reason to state that they have been a *positive injury to the country*. We have noticed at least, as many as *twenty* suicides connected with these fanatical excitements; and three or four *cold blooded murders!* Yes, where the father, wild in insanity, has stained his hands with the blood of his innocent offspring!—Whatever tends to improve the moral and religious condition of the people—whatever serves to purify the heart, and to raise the mind in adoration to God—should receive the cheering support of every man. But the question arises, do these protracted meetings have this effect? Do they not, instead of refining the mind and purifying the heart, tend to dethrone reason and overturn the structure of the human mind? There is abundant evidence of this fact—sufficient to convince the most zealous sectarian. Then why must they be tolerated? Why do not the people raise their voice against them, and point out to the minister of the gospel the *necessity* of discontinuing them? If the untiring efforts of our priests are to be concentrated in these meetings, the time will soon arrive when almost every family in the country will have a *maniac* as an inmate! The husband will mourn for a wife—a wife for a husband---a parent for a son, and a brother for a sister! The extent of the evil cannot be foretold. But the evil will surely come, with all its horrors of murder and despair!

God forbid that we should do anything to injure the cause of religion---our aim is to aid it. We cannot discover the holy *principle* of that zeal which leads to suicide and murder---we cannot discover how the Creator is worshipped in that religion which leads to insanity---nor can we see why the continuance of these protracted meetings is persisted in, when experience has proved them a positive injury to the spread of pure religion. We appeal to the good sense of the people if our remarks are not founded on reason---if they are not such as are dictated by every mind, unbiassed by bigotry and superstition? If so, why not instruct our ministers in the path they should pursue: and, by a heartfelt adoration, convince them that the Creator's love is abundant, and freely bestowed upon all who ask for it in sincerity and holiness.

Every person should take this subject home to his bosom. Let him picture to himself the agony and despair that follows Insanity---let him draw aside the veil that shrouds futurity, and behold his wife---the tender companion of his bosom, weltering in her own blood---a victim to blind fanaticism and distempered zeal. Does his heart not quake---is his hand not palsied with fear! Well may he feel thus---well may the bare *picture* startle him. But the reality---the horrible reality---alas! how vain the attempt to bring its dreadful consequences home to our bosom!

FROM THE GOSPEL ANCHOR.

TWO CHANCES.

Messrs. Editors—As many of our limitarian brethren seem to feel a proud security in the idea of having *two chances* of salvation to the Universalist's one, I wish, through the medium of your paper, to make a few remarks on the subject.

The argument generally advanced, is this:—"If your doctrine is true, I shall be saved at last, as well as you, whether I believe it or not. If yours happens to fail and mine is true, I shall stand the same chance of being saved as though yours were true; but you, if you disbelieve my doctrine, must eventually be lost. Therefore, all things considered, it is much safer to believe my doctrine than yours, because I have two chances to your one." This show of an argument is frequently advanced, as though it contained a real objection to the doctrine of Universal Salvation. But let us examine its length and breadth.

The objection appears to make the salvation of men, and especially of Universalists, depend upon the truth or falsehood of certain doctrines. But does any person expect to be saved by *doctrine?* If so, then certainly that person labors under a very great mistake. Universalists have always been taught to believe that Christ—not their doctrine—is the Savior of mankind. The Bible, from which they derive their doctrine, teaches them that, "Jesus is the Savior of the world."—By him, therefore, they expect to be delivered from the bondage of sin and corruption; on him they build their hopes of salvation from death, and of immortal glory; he is truly *their* Savior. And if he is not the Savior of our limitarian opposers then they have none; "for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." But if their doctrine teaches that Jesus is *their* Savior, then they build upon the same foundation with Universalists. They predicate their hopes of salvation upon the same immutable Rock. Now suppose this foundation—the foundation of the Universalist's hope of salvation, should fail, what would become of the orthodox extra chance? What doctrine—what foundation—what Redeemer would save them, were the Savior of Universalists to fail? Surely none. In such an event they, their two chances, Universalists, and all, must sink together in one promiscuous annihilation.

Why, then, is it safer to believe *their* doctrine, than Universalism? Can faith alone, secure the gift of immortality and endless blessedness? If so, their *faith*—not Christ—becomes the Savior of mankind. But is faith a savior? Is it indispensable to salvation? Suppose it is: what then is that which must be believed? Endless wrath and unending tortures? Will the belief that a part of the human race must be damned to ceaseless wo, secure the salvation of him who believes it?—Suppose, then, *all* should believe that a part will be damned, all, of course, will be saved. This would make Universalism true, and consequently all would believe a lie. But must we believe a lie in order to be saved? Suppose, then, Universalism is a lie, and suppose we believe the doctrine, we should surely be saved at last. In this case we should be just as well, and even better off than we should to believe in never-ceasing tortures.

Our orthodox friends seem to think it necessary to believe we shall be damned before we can be saved. But Universalists are taught to believe in Christ as *their* Savior. Suppose, then, a belief in Christ is indispensable to salvation Universalists believe in him, as well as their limitarian neighbors. Have they not, then, the same chance of being saved? Most certainly. If, then, *their* chance fails—if *their* Savior is annihilated or destroyed, where is the orthodox *whip-row?* Certainly, if Christ fails, they have no Savior; for faith in endless damnation can never save them. The chances, then, are just as good, and just as many to him who believes in Universalism, as to the believer in the opposite doctrine.

But, perhaps Universalists do not believe *right*. Perhaps it is necessary to believe in Christ, and believe in hell at the same time, before we can be saved. But if salvation depends on the exercise of such a faith in this life, what will become of infants and idiots? They surely cannot believe; and are they damned? No person at the present day, possessed of common humanity, will for a moment, admit the idea of infant damnation. If, then, such a faith is not essential to the salvation of infants and idiots, it certainly is not necessary to save any one. Why, then, is it safer to believe in endless misery?

The truth is, as it regards our future life and immortality, it is just as safe to believe Universalism, as the opposite doctrine. And as it regards our present condition, it is far safer and better to believe Universalism. For—

In the first place, there is far less danger of insanity and suicide. No person was ever known to run crazy and kill himself in consequence of believing that through the illimitable goodness of God, all will eventually be saved. But, on the other hand, the multiplied instances of insanity and suicide occasioned by the fear of endless torment, show too plainly that a belief in that heart-rending and soul-chilling doctrine is extremely dangerous.

Secondly.—There is far more enjoyment in the belief of Universalism, than its opposite—and less wo. This position, it is presumed none will deny, except those who take delight in the reflection that the time will come when they, blessed and happy, will rejoice to behold their wicked neighbors wailing in endless agony. But those who have believed both doctrines, can bear witness to the truth of the position.

And, in the third place, Universalism is far less licentious in its tendency. True, the opposers of that doctrine charge all the wickedness in the world upon Universalists; but the gross enormities too often found in their own ranks, make but a sorry comment upon their unjust accusations. The truth is, none are free from guile; but Universalists are as much so as any. And surely nothing will more effeetually soften the obdurate heart of man, and expel the vile passions from his bosom, than the belief that all men are recipients of the unchanged goodness of God, and all will eventually meet together in a state of perfect bliss.

So then, on the whole, it appears that instead of two chances of salvation, the orthodox have, in reality, no more than the Universalists; and that, as it respects security, it is far safer to believe in Universalism, than in their unmerciful doctrine.

R. O. W.

Amsterdam.

FROM THE GENIUS OF LIBERTY.

Shall we take them at their word?—Partialists tell us, that our doctrine corrupts the heart and gives free and unrestrained indulgence to all sin, because it sets aside the fear of punishment and invalidates all the threatnings of the Supreme Being; and that their own doctrine threatens the sinner with the most intense and interminable pain, so that its believers dare not so often transgress. Now it is notorious that they have thousands believing in their creed who are not worthy of their fellowship, and who cannot be admitted to their communion on account of their unchristian lives. If their doctrine is so powerful in reforming the heart, why do not all that believe it practice Christianity? and what is the real difference between their christian and unchristian believers in an endless hell? Why the former are too cowardly to sin, and the latter have courage enough to do it. The former are afraid of endless misery, and therefore dare not sin; the latter believe in it, but fear it not, and therefore dare to sin. It will not do to say the former do not wish to sin; for if they do not wish to sin, they would not do it although they believed in no endless hell. It must be the fear of hell which restrains them, or such fear is left without use. So that, upon this hypothesis, the only difference between orthodox christians and orthodox sinners, is, that the former have not so much hell daring courage as the latter! Two men come together into the field by night, to steal each of them a horse, as they are about to bridle their steeds, they see at a distance a dark shadowy substance, which (as guilt is always haunted with fear) they both believe to be the owner of the property. The one concludes he will risk him, as there are so many chances to escape, and gallops off with his horse; the other sneaks off and says to himself, had it not been for the law I could have had a horse too. Now what is the difference? If the one is a thief, the other is a poor thievish cowardly wretch. How incomparably fairer stands the character of that man, who is honest and has no desire to steal. Partialists say that Universalists always *dare* to sin—that they dare to commit all the excesses of iniquity, because they believe and fear no punishment at all.—Yet it is well known that Universalists as a body are as moral and honest as Partialists. What then is the difference in the real character of the two classes? Answer. The former *dare* commit all manner of sin, but have so little disposition to do it, that they are as good as the Partialists; and the latter *dare not* commit any sin, but they have such a strong and unconquerable disposition to do it, that they are no better than Universalists.

Such are the unavoidable conclusions that follow from the view that our opponents take of us. They are drawn legitimately from their own premises. It seems a tacit confession on their part that we can do as well without an endless hell as they can do with it. And who would be most acceptable to the final Judge, those who acted under the constant and powerful restraints of hell, or those who did as well without those restraints?

But we deny that we are so good as to do as well as we do without reference "to the recompense of reward." We believe in punishment and we fear the righteous retributions of Justice if we offend. But an opponent will say that we hold to none after death, which is the same as none at all, as all are to be saved at last. Is punishment in this life then no punishment at all? Does it make no difference with us whether we are happy or miserable in this life? If not what difference can it make in eternity?

But all *we* know is, that "God will render to every man according to his deeds," either before or after death. In our judgment it would appear that all men were not in all cases punished for all their sins in this life. Besides the design of punishment is reformation. God uses such means as will surely answer his purpose; but the punishment some receive here does not reform them, therefore, it would seem, that they must have more. We do not like the idea that death is a sure release from all the claims of retributive justice. We know of no certain termination of pain till the glorious resurrection to incorruptible and immortal life. All sin must—it must be punished. We would that all sects—nay all men believed this—that it were written on the skies in letters of burning light—that the whole world might live and die in profound and solemn conviction that the all-pervading justice of the Most High, holds the everlasting balance of moral adjudication over the destinies of the Universe.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1831.

TO OUR FRIENDS AND PATRONS.

We believe that diffidence should not prevent our urging upon the friends and patrons of the Messenger the importance of their exertions to increase its subscription list. In doing this, however, we owe it to them, as well as ourselves, to express our gratitude for their past favors, and to acknowledge that our expectations have not been disappointed. Still we hope they will bear in mind the various discouraging circumstances, under which our undertaking was commenced. If there exists a necessity for a paper of this kind in New-York, (which we are not permitted to doubt,) there exists an equal necessity for exertion to sustain it. And while we use our best endeavors to render the Messenger deserving of public patronage, we would fain indulge the cheering hope, that it will not be withheld. Of the merit of our labors, we do not pretend to judge, but of the sincerity of our desire for the wider diffusion of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God," and of the Publisher's willingness to incur no inconsiderable pecuniary hazard in a necessary undertaking of public interest, we can speak with freedom. It is useless to multiply words. Our friends, we doubt not, appreciate our claims, and will answer them. In conclusion, we beg our patrons in the city, and especially such as have taken an active interest in our behalf, to call, as opportunity permits, at the Publisher's Office, that, if possible, we may with their counsel, devise measures for a more extensive circulation of the Christian Messenger in our own borders. S.

SCRIPTURE EXPLANATION.

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. Luke iv, 16.

To those acquainted only with the modern manner of performing religious service, and wholly ignorant of the service of the Jewish Synagogue, there is a subject of difficulty in this passage. Christ was not a Levite, a priest, nor a minister of the Synagogue. How then should *he stand up for to read?* This seeming difficulty is easily explained by Dr. Prideaux. Connections. Vol. i. p. 399, 400. S.

"Next to the Sheliah Zibbor (*the angel of the congregation*, who offered up the public prayers) were the deacons, or inferior ministers of the synagogue, in Hebrew called Chazanim, that is, *overseers*, who were also fixed ministers, and under the rulers of the synagogue, had the charge and oversight of all things in it, kept the sacred books of the law and the prophets and other holy scriptures, as also the books of their public liturgies, and all other utensils belonging to the synagogue, and brought them forth whenever they were to be used in the public service. And particularly they stood by and overlooked them that did read the lessons out of the law and the prophets, and corrected them and set them right when they did read amiss, and took the book of them again when they had done. And thus it is said of our Savior, when he was called out to read the lesson out of the prophets in the synagogue of Nazareth, of which he was a member, that after he had done he gave the book again to the minister, that is, the Chazan or deacon of the synagogue. For there was anciently no fixed synagogue minister for the reading of the lessons; but the rulers of the synagogue, when the time of reading those lessons came, called out any member of the congregation for this service that was able to perform it. And it was usually done in this order. A priest was called out first, and next a Levite, if any of these orders were present in the congregation, and after that any other Israelite, till they made up in all seven."

MODERATE CALVINISM.

We extract the following from the New-York Evangelist. It is found in an article entitled *What is a Revival Spirit?*

"But they exercise a revival spirit, when, and *only* when, they *believe* and therefore *feel*, the dangers to which the impenitent are exposed—when they believe and therefore feel, that there is no necessity that any should perish, under a dispensation of grace, but that all, with suitable exertions, may be saved, at least, that all, who are yet probationers, have an opportunity of salvation of which they may avail themselves."

Such is moderate Calvinism, which is, being interpreted, rank Arminianism. Br. Leavitt, editor of the Evangelist, is, if we mistake not, a Presbyterian, and, of course, believes in the Presbyterian "Confession of Faith." We beg him to compare the above extract with certain parts of his Creed, viz.

"Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved, but the elect only." Chap. iii, Art. vi

"To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same." Chap. viii, Art. viii.

"This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man; who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it." Chap. x, Art. ii.

Notwithstanding the Confession of Faith is as clear as sunlight in its declarations, that Christ died for the elect alone, and that even they are wholly *passive* and unable to do any thing for themselves, our modern Calvinists (for so they choose to be called) avow and teach, that Christians possess "a revival spirit, when and only when they believe and feel, that there is no necessity that any should perish, under a dispensation of grace, but that all, with suitable exertions, (on the part of man,) may be saved." S.

WONDERFUL CONVERSION.

A correspondent of the Advocate and Journal relates a most wonderful conversion—it was of a Universalist!! Would you know, kind reader, who he was? Well, this information can easily be given. He is a "farmer" and "lives in the town of ——, on Long Island." He was a very bad man, opposed "to temperance societies, Sabbath schools and the preaching of the Gospel, &c." and withal, was "a firm believer in, and conspicuous advocate of" Universalism. But after pursuing this naughty course for a long time he at last went "to the house of God, to hear a stranger of some note who was to occupy the pulpit that evening." The preacher, as things happened, was not one who "tickles the ear," but he "considers that the blood of souls will be required at his hand, unless he warns them of their danger, therefore he shunned not to declare '*the whole counsel of God.*'" He took for his text, "Except a man be born again," &c. and "while urging the necessity of the new birth in most pathetic language," says the cautious writer, "repeating at times '*Ye must be born again*' with such power as to weaken the foundation of our Universalist, he felt the shock—it was too much—he saw himself a sinner, and that '*no sinner hath eternal life abiding in him*,'—he had been trying to climb up to heaven, but alas! the way led directly to hell." Finally he went to a class meeting "willing to try every means of grace" and desired the prayers of the class. Wonderful to tell, "in a few moments all was still—all was hushed—the *change*—the *happy change* from *death* to *life* had come. His tongue was unloosed—he said 'I cannot be mistaken—'tis—yes, 'tis religion—'tis Jesus.'"

Such is a sketch of the narrative. And we beg leave to ask Dr. Bangs, and, through him, his correspondent, to furnish the *name* and *residence* of this converted Universalist. Blanks are but poor directories. The public has so often been imposed upon in this manner by designing men, that it becomes those who are *honest*, to do more than say "a farmer in the town of ——, Long Island," &c. &c. But without insisting on *names* and *places*, which we perdict neither the Dr. nor his correspondent *dares* to give, we complain of gross incidental misrepresentations of Universalism, in the narrative above alluded to, of which we cannot believe Dr. Bangs ignorant. For instance it is fairly implied that Universalists believe in no new birth—that they are opposed to temperance, Sabbath schools, and the preaching of the Gospel—that Universalist preachers "make it their chief object to please the people with smooth sentences and something that will 'tickle the ear' and gain applause"—that Universalists are trying by something or other to climb up to heaven, &c. &c. We would not be uncharitable, but he who will deliberately slander a denomination of christians in this manner, or aid in doing it, is little entitled to our credence. We believe the story a fiction, palmed off upon the public as a Methodist triumph over Universalism. S.

The following remarks, in reference to the present popular excitements are from "Niles' Register," with the reputation of which, most of our readers must be familiar. We agree with Mr. N. that "it is a delicate matter, and one that should not be lightly interfered with," yet we can hardly assent to the idea "that there have been cases in which the LAW ought to have applied;" unless they may be considered in the light of breaches of the public peace, wholly aside from modes of religious worship. Mr. N. himself, we presume, would deprecate any interference of civil or religious power, one with the other, as a dangerous precedent. Our own feelings must undergo a material change, before we can be satisfied that it is strictly within the province of the civil law, either to *uphold* or *condemn* any form or mode of religious worship, directly or indirectly. We do not believe it necessary. Public opinion should be the great

lever to operate here. Encourage education—foster and promote free investigation, and there need be but little fear of the result. So sure as the mind is informed, and left unshackled in its examinations, it will sooner or later arrive at just conclusions. Evils may exist for a time, through prejudice and blind zeal, but the very excesses produced by them, will call forth the remedy. We see the evidence of it, in the measures (of popular religionists of the day,) which have been put in operation, and so zealously followed up. The attention of thousands has been drawn to the subject, who, perhaps, previously had never given it one passing thought, and they seem disposed to place a just estimate on their bearing and consequences. These consequences may be severe—they may even be appalling, for the time being, yet great caution should be used in applying a remedy. For ourselves we hardly know where the line of distinction could *safely* be drawn, to admit of an application of the civil law as a corrective. "My kingdom," says the great founder of Christianity, "is not of this world;" and in its principles and operations, it would really seem to every reflecting mind, as wholly distinct from all temporal concerns. In its contemplation, the exhortation "come now and let us reason together," comes home to the feelings of every willing heart, with all the force of inspiration. Give us the *ability* and *opportunity* of "reasoning" on the glorious principles of this Spiritual Kingdom, and in accordance with the opinion of the royal Psalmist, we should feel a confidence, that although "weeping may endure for a night," yet "joy cometh in the morning." P.

"*Insanity*, produced by wild notions about religion, has recently caused several murders and suicides in the United States; and hence some of the *exciting* meetings have been severely condemned. There surely is a rightful limit even to a zeal to do good; a fitness and discretion in all things. The bruised reed is easily broken—and when we see that surgeons are oftentimes punished for unskillful operations on the body; are we without remedy against individuals who work upon and destroy both body and mind, by indiscreet or ignorant proceedings in religious subjects, which bring forth *murder and suicide?* It is a delicate matter, and one that should not be lightly interfered with; but we think that there have been cases wherein the law ought to have applied to punish evil doers for *outrageous* attempts to accomplish what they thought was good. If *ignorance* does not excuse the surgeon or physician, why should it the clergyman? We cannot see why. And in highly excited cases because of feelings about religion, worthy clergymen would be as cautious to reduce them into soberness, as a faithful physician could be to lessen the fever of his patient, preliminary to a *cure* of any general disease which might affect them. The *fever*, in either case, must be first "broken"—and then a healthful state may be hoped for.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN DANGER.

The very existence of the Presbyterian church is threatened! Another year will very probably witness the overthrow of Confession, Catechism, and the sacred institutions of the fathers!! We are no prophet, kind readers. We are only chroniclers of the times, and believe, as in duty bound, pious and godly ministers. If we err, it is because they misrepresent or are mistaken; and if the Presbyterian clergy do not understand their own affairs, there is no reason to expect we should.

It seems that heresy, the bane of all sects, and of dominant ones especially, has crept into the heart of the Presbyterian Church, and is poisoning her very life's blood. This heresy, wonderful to relate, has been progressing for several years, so that at this moment, it is a serious question if it is not held by a majority of the church. The parties are divided off and named in due order. Those who stand fast in the faith of Calvin, who receive the Confession and Catechism of the Presbyterian church, are called the "Old School," or "High Churchmen" while the heretics are styled in contradistinction the "New School," or "Low Churchmen." The exact difference we suppose to be, that the Old school is Calvinistic, and the New school Arminian.

Sundry Reverend gentlemen of the Synod of Philadelphia, as a Central Committee, have set forth in an "Appeal to the Presbyterian church," divers grievances which they fear they *may yet be made to suffer* from the ungodliness of their heretical brethren. The '*Orthodox*' part, of the church (we use this epithet only because the gentlemen above alluded to have an attachment to it,) charge the "baser sort" with having manifested designs upon the "whole Presbyterian system," in other words, that under their control the "Theological Seminaries are in danger of being revolutionized, and perverted from the intention of their orthodox founders," that the "doctrinal standards are in danger, either of total disregard, or of a revision and alteration that will effectually change their character," and finally that the "Boards of Education and of Missions are in danger of being wrested from "the orthodox party," and "rendered subsidiary to the plans and purposes" of the heterodox party. This appeal, it must be recollected, is addressed to "orthodox Presbyterians." And they are reminded that it was only by "the interposition of God's good providence" that they were saved "from *fatal innovations*" at the last General Assembly. The language of this providence is represented to be—"You shall have another year to make it manifest, whether you have a sufficient love to the pure and holy truths of your Confession of Faith and Catechism, and to the sacred institutions of your fathers, to awake to their defence and preservation, or whether with listless indifference you will suffer them to be invaded and destroyed, and you and your children deprived forever of a birthright, which you ought to value more than life itself." Is not that sublime? Is it not affecting? The *pure and holy truths* of election and reprobation, of total depravity and infinite sin, a BIRTHRIGHT! to be valued more than LIFE, itself!! Really, "it is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous." Finally, the Appeal exhorts "orthodox Presbyterians" to send "orthodox commissioners, elders and ministers" to the next General Assembly, and these delegates are exhorted, as under "a tremendous responsibility," to attend and do their duty in preserving Calvinism, their own and their children's birthright.

The best of the thing is, that the Rev. N. S. S. Beman of Troy, N. Y. we presume in the character of the accused heretics, has used "great plainness of speech" in the defence, charging the accusers in turn with divers misdemeanors, such as *electioneering*, asserting what is not *true*, *arrogating* a little too much *piety*, *orthodoxy*, &c. to themselves, and withal, making *proffers* of MONEY for the advancement of their party objects.

"Who shall decide when doctors disagree?" For ourselves, we pretend to know little of the subject, but suppose we may safely conclude that our Presbyterian friends are in something of a quarrel. If it shall tend to subvert error and build up the truth, we shall "rejoice and joy" in all their tribulations, while we cannot but confess our present regret to see professed christians in apparent ill-humor with each other. S.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Messrs Editors—In these times of "religious excitements" and "four days' meetings" it becomes the candid inquirer after truth, to weigh well the various doctrines that are promulgated, before he embraces them as the object of his research. For my own part, when I hear from the sacred desk, as "God's truth" that there are some of our race "given over to blindness of mind, and hardness of heart," and must inevitably sink to everlasting despair, "their *day of grace being over*, having grieved away the Spirit forever," &c. I am ready to ask with the prophet Isaiah "who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him?" I cannot conceive what rational ground there is for preaching a doctrine which our *Savior* never taught, neither can I discover any propriety in calling such a doctrine the *Gospel*. The modern revivalists tell us that the Spirit of the Lord is not only indispensably necessary to convert the wicked, but is the only efficient means to save and reform them. Still they contend that unless we embrace the overtures of mercy *now*, it may be eternally too late, and with some the Spirit has *already* done striving. They quote Genesis vi, 3, to prove this position, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man;" that is, I suppose, in other words, the Spirit of God is present at our protracted and nocturnal meetings, convincing and converting sinners—*now* is the time to "get religion," or the Spirit may take its eternal flight from you and leave you to sink into never ending wo. If the "Spirit" in the above text be that which causes the modern revivals, and saves the sinner from hell, why is it said in the same verse, (which is generally studiously omitted,) "for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years?" And why does Job say the "Spirit of God is in my nostrils" (xxvii, 3.) If our Creator proclaimed the fact in this declaration that some of his offspring were to resist his Spirit and rush headlong to eternal misery, is it not somewhat singular that no such *consequence* was also proclaimed? Admitting the orthodox view of this passage to be correct, it will be seen that it *opposes* the doctrine of endless misery—for God says, Isaiah lvii, 16. "For I will not contend forever, neither will I be *always wroth*." We are told that the "wrath of God will be poured out upon the impenitent, world without end," but how can this be true, when he declares to the contrary? Persons who attend the above meetings, and especially the young, should reflect, and read for themselves, "try the spirits, prove all things, hold fast that which is good." If these newly invented schemes of making people pious be of God, they will stand, but if they be of man, they will come to nought. The word of God should be our guide, and truth, the plain *truth*, the object of our pursuit in matters of religion, whatever may be the *popular* notions of the day—reason, yes, "carnal reason" should direct us in the choice or rejection of religious creeds, and in my humble opinion "pure and undefiled" and rational religion may be practised, divested of the dogma of endless wo.

C. P. O.

New-York, December 19, 1831.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

HOPE.

"But *hope* the charmer, linger'd still behind."

Of the various passions that Heaven has bestowed upon the human race, none is so universally and so constantly indulged—so interwoven with our very existence, as hope. It is a blessing given alike to the high and the low, the rich and the poor, to the youth in the pride of his strength, and to the man of grey hairs. In every period of life we instinctively submit ovrselves, with a greater or less degree of confidence, to its guidance; and though it too often beguiles and leads us astray, it still lingers warm and unsubdued in our bosom.

In youth there are circumstances which render the influence of hope peculiarly powerful.

At that season, every thing around us is full of those bewitching charms of novelty, to which the young and buoyant spirit is ever joyfully alive. It is then that fancy is most busy with her fairy creations—filling our imaginations with her glowing visions, and throwing a hue of romance and unreal loveliness over every object around us. It is at this period that the flattering voice of hope is most heeded, and the mind most susceptible to its delusive promises. As it tells us of fame and happiness, that in coming years, are to be ours, and traces with beguiling touch, a path that disappointment shall never cross, it kindles an ambition in our heart, which, as it is fostered or neglected, urges us on to usefulness and honor, or sinks us in sloth and inactivity.

As we advance in life and cares are thickening around us, and disappointment sternly lays its iron hand upon our heart, and casts its gloomy shadow darkly over our path, the light of hope may perhaps burn less brightly than at first, but it is never extinguished.

It is true there are sometimes seasons in this life, when we are visited by trials so severe, that it seems as if hope and happiness had forever deserted us. There are trials which can bow down the spirit in its gayest hour, and make us feel in bitterness of soul as if we did indeed "cumber the fair earth." Misfortune and disgrace may assail us—friends may forsake us in the day of our utmost need, or we may lay them one after another in the grave, until we are left alone. Then as the sad feeling comes over us that all we loved and cherished—all, that ever cared for us, are no more, and we look onward to the dark and cheerless way we are henceforth to tread alone, the lonely heart feels as if every earthly hope were extinguished. Yet, amid the gloom and desolation of the scene, we remember that there is another and a better world, where the trials that distress us here are never known; we remember that in that world we shall again meet those loved ones who are now resting in their graves, and the light of hope again dawns upon our path. But it is a hope, that, turning from the fading joys of this world, sheds its holy and chastened rays upon the night of the tomb, and gilds with the promise of a bright and eternal morning, our passage to its gloomy portals. That hope is constant and unchanging. It is one which the world can neither give nor take away, for it is based on the promises of Him whose "word abideth forever."

C. M. S.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

MERCY.

How lovely to the humble penitent is the sound of mercy—would I could write the word in imperishable characters—would it were engraven on the heart of every child of Adam. Ye who profess Christianity, cherish this godlike attribute—let the accents of mercy flow from your lips—verify your words by your deeds. Mercy has been meted to you, will ye refuse to mete it to your neighbor? Remember it is written, "blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." If ye then exercise mercy, ye shall be the recipients of it; but much I fear that mercy among men, yea, even among professing Christians, is but little practised. To the demon of cruelty, "black as night and terrible as hell," many pay obsequious homage. This demon, foul and horrible, stalks through our country, and from his lips drop inexplicable blasphemies. His motto is *mystery* instead of mercy. His words wither the soul. Among the children of men he scatters firebrands and death. Mercy is forgotten. Even the Most High is blasphemed—is represented as having no mercy. It is said of him that his wrath shall *always* continue, when he himself has declared "he will not be *always* wroth." It is said of him that there will be a period when his mercy shall no longer *endure;* when he himself has declared his "mercy *endureth forever*." O that men would speak the truth of him who "keepeth mercy for thousands," but "who will by no means clear the guilty," but chastise them in mercy. O that men would "*pray* for those who despitefully use them and persecute them," and strive to imitate him "whose tender mercies are over all his works."

UNIVERSAL SUPPLICATIONIST.

Stamford, Conn.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

ORIGINAL ANECDOTE.

A Methodist in a recent conversation with a Universalist, remarked that the wicked and unregenerated were unfit for the enjoyments of heaven and therefore if they died in that state they could not be saved. To which the latter observed, "we shall *all* be *changed*," "for this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality." The limitarian thus rejoined; "*That looks too much like Popery—I do not believe in a purgatory!!*"

S. J. H.

MARRIED.

In Westford, Mass. by the Rev. Mr. Parkhurst, Mr. Augustus H. Searle, of Chelmsford, and Miss Rebecca Wright, daughter of Mr. Levi Wright of the former place.

DIED.

In this city, on Sunday evening last, Mr. Daniel Clark, aged 43.

In Gray, Nov. 5th, Mr. Samuel Mayall, aged 60. He was a native af England; came to this country when young, and by industry, perseverance and economy, acquired a decent property. He was highly respected as a man of uprightness, integrity and candor, and sincere and conscientious in his religious principles. He embraced, from honest convictions of its truth and excellence, the doctrine of God's universal love, and the consequent salvation of all men, through the divinely appointed Mediator; which faith he unwaveringly professed, and in the hope and confidence of which, he peacefully died.—*Chris. Intel.*

At his residence in Lebanon, Madison county, on the 2d ult., John Powell, aged 68. His funeral was attended on the Sunday following, by an unusually large and respectable concourse of friends, who evinced by their deportment how sincerely they valued him while living, and lamented him when dead; to whom the consolations of the Gospel were acceptably administered by Br. Freeman. Mr. Powell, for some time previous to his death, was a supporter and firm believer in the doctrine of God's impartial grace. As an evidence of his strength of mind and feeling on this subject, we give a short extract attached to his will to his family:—"And now, dearly beloved wife and children, hear and remember this, the last advice and counsel of your earthly companion and parent, whose last and highest wish, is, that you may be happy in time, and through an unending eternity, with all the family of man. Be loving and affectionate one to another, always promoting the peace and happiness of each other as your own, at all times and under all circumstances, remembering, and always practising, agreeably to the word of God's holy prophet, to deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God. And may God of his infinite mercy keep and guide you here in the paths and truths of righteousness, and at last receive you into mansions of eternal rest, with all the ransomed family of man, is the last wish and prayer of your affectionate husband and father: and may God, in all things, direct and preserve you all. Amen."—*Mag. and Adv.*

On her journey to Centreville, Va. Nov. 9th, Mrs. Hepzibeth, wife of Mr. Abijah North, of Berlin, Conn. In the death of Mrs. N. a husband is called to mourn the loss of an affectionate companion, and three small children are bereft of a tender mother. She is gone to the land of silence, in obedience to the high behest of the universal parent; but still lives in the memories of a large circle of friends. She was a daughter of Abraham, believing that the "seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head," and thereby become the blessing of "all the nations, families, and kindreds of the earth." The society of "United Brethren' in Berlin will lament her death, and remember, with profitable satisfaction, her devotion to the cause of truth, as well as the examples she has left them, of its influence on her conduct.—*Religious Inquirer.*

In New-Haven, on the 22d inst. Mr. Peter Clark, aged 28. This young man had labored under the most unhappy mental disease for several months past. He believed that he was one of the non-elect---and some days before his death, he adopted the notion that it was sinful for him to receive food, protect himself against cold, or use any of the blessings of a kind Providence, as he was a reprobate—and he lived up to his faith. It is very singular, that such cases as the above seldom or never result from the religious efforts of any denomination in the United States except that one which possesses all the religion, all the talents, all the wealth, and all the respectability in the land. But (not to trifle on so serious a subject) there is something in these frequent cases of delirium following certain religious teaching, that requires the attention of men learned in theology. Ought not the qualified Doctors to raise a committee to examine and report a Tract on the subject? It can hardly be doubted that such a tract would be generally read.—*Register.*

The "BOSTON ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSALISTS," met in Lowell, Mass. on the 7th inst. Ordination was conferred on Br. Jehiel Smith, and Letters of Fellowship granted to Brs. Winslow, W. Wright, and Elbridge Trull. The Association adjourned to meet in Marlborough, the first Wednesday in June, 1832.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Q." and "Reflector," are received and will appear next week.

LETTERS AND REMITTANCES,

Received at this office, ending December 28th.

P. Master, Southold, L. I.; P. Master, Cutchogue, L. I.; C. P. P. Durham, N. Y.; S. M. North-Salem, N. Y.; J. B. West Farms, N. Y. $2; R. W. for C. C. Lowell, Mass, $2; C. M. Derby, Vt. $2; G. W. Montgomery, Ala. $10, for himself—T. M.—W. A.—N. E. B. and G. W.; A. P. Bethel, Ct.; P. Master, Plattsburgh, N. Y.; Rev. T. W. Boston; F. C. Wallingford, Ct. (by a friend) $1.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

The religious exercises in the Universalist Church, at the junction of Division and Grand-street, will hereafter commence at half past 10 o'clock in the morning, half past 2 in the afternoon, and at half past 6 in the evening.

Br. S. J. HILLYER will preach at Mamaroneck, Saturday evening, Dec. 31st.—At Saw Pitt, Sunday, January 1st, 1832, and at Rye, in the evening of the same day.—at Brooklyn, Sunday, the 8th of Jan.---at Newark, Sunday the 15th Jan. forenoon and afternoon, and at Camptown, in the evening.

NOTICE.

"The Ladies' Dorcas Society," will meet on Wednesday, 4th Jan. at Mrs. Dodge's, 117 Bowery, at 2 o'clock, P. M.

FROM THE PHILADELPHIA GAZETTE.

SUPPLICATION.

When on the sad and yearning heart,
The clouds of early sorrow fall,
Oh what shall bid the gloom depart,
And lift the spirit from their thrall?
When 'neath the foldings of the pall,
The lost and beautiful are laid—
Oh who shall answer to the call
By watchful love in anguish made?

When from our daily paths, like flowers,
Our kindred wither one by one,
Ah! what shall gild the weary hours,
Or bring again the unshadowed sun
To smile all darkening scenes upon?—
To chase the clouds that round them rise—
Recall again each vision gone,
And bathe in light the uplifted skies?

When, with a shadow o'er them flung,
Appear the seer Autumnal trees,
And every blast their boughs among
Awakens mournful images;
What, on the lapse of hours like these,
Can Earth, with all her phantoms, fling,
When Hope has ceased her melodies,
And folded up her rainbow wing?

Is it not sweet, when song and dream
Have passed, like sunset's sky of fire;
When Love's false pinion sends no gleam
O'er Pleasure's crushed and tuneless lyre—
To raise with purified desire
The prayer, in earnest suppliance given,
Which lifts the immortal spirit higher,
And antedates the joy of heaven?

HOPE.

See through the clouds that roll in wrath,
Yon little star benignant peep,
To light along their trackless path
The wanderers of the stormy deep.

And thus, oh! Hope, thy lovely form
In sorrow's gloomy night, shall be
The star that looks through cloud and storm
Upon a dark and moonless sea.

When heaven is all serene and fair,
Full many a brighter gem we meet;
'Tis when the tempest hovers there,
Thy beam is most divinely sweet.

The rainbow, with the sun's decline,
Like faithless friends, will disappear;
Thy lights, dear star, more brightly shine,
When all is wail and sorrow here.

And though Aurora's stealing gleam
May wake a morning of delight,
'Tis only thy enchanting beam
Will smile amid affliction's night.

THANKSGIVING.

"It is at once a beautiful and melancholy season, when at the close of the year we meet together, the long known and the well loved, at the banquet and before the altar, at the social board and in the temple of the Eternal. They whom interest or distance, or perhaps, unkindness, has estranged from the family board, meet together now, hand grasps hand, and heart expands to heart.

Yet there is something sad in the thought that our rejoicing is over the grave of the season. We know indeed that decay must follow change, and that death will tread on decay.—Trees put forth their leaves, and they are scattered even by the summer breeze. The rose tree hangs out its blossoms to the sun, and the west winds come over them, and the garden is strewed with their beautiful ruins. And the wild bird sports amid the summer branches, and he too has the wings of our hopes, and when the winter comes he flies away. Yet we shrink not the less from decay, that we know not the time when the spoiler shall call for his prey. And it seems a bitter mockery when he choose that hour which man has set apart for joys, when they whom we love depart with the fading flowers and the falling leaves, and we weep at their desertion the more, that we weep hopeless, and desolate, and alone; that fresh leaves shall return, and flowers put forth again in the spring, and we turn into the loneliness of our own deserted hearts, and feel "They went with the flower, but they shall not return."—There are thoughts that come up amid the joy of the feast—like the death's head at the banquet of the monarch of yore—and speak yet a deeper, and a sterner language, for they tell us, not that we are mortal, but that the chill of mortality is breathed on the fair flowers that are rooted the deepest in our hearts, and that death is written over the portals even of our life. True the day of rejoicing arrives, but where the arrow is driven the poor heart will ache on. The note of praise is indeed heard, but who can enter the secret sanctuary—who can number the tears that are not heard—who can measure the bitterness of despair that is buried in the silence of the broken heart. As the wounded deer seeks in the dark covert a shelter from its companions and from man, the spirit buries in its own dark depth, the wound on which it shrinks from communion with aught but its God.

We have stood perhaps like some gaudy tree, which has long reared its blossoms in the pride of its beauty—but bud after bud is blighted, blossom after blossom is scathed—branch after branch hath the storm rent away; but the hand of time hath been busy at its heart, and it falls—in the loneliness of the desert it falls—and its graceful ruins cumber the ground it was wont to cover with its shade. And yet so gradual are the footsteps of change and decay, that we hardly notice their approach, till the recurrence of their anniversaries warns us, as it were, to breathe for a moment from our course, and to look back for those who left the goal with us, and but now were at our sides, and in our hearts; but their places have been blotted from the records of life, and if our memory has treasured their names, it has but added them to the sad catalogue of broken and forgotten friendships. Then the past rises before us, and feelings that have long slumbered in the grave of years bound again into being. There is no voice like the voice of the dead, when from the "shoreless sea" it calls to us, who yet linger behind, and with our sails trimmed, wait but the breeze that is to speed us onward and homeward with them. And as the chains that would have grappelled our spirits to the earth are broken, we wait but the summons to spurn the shackles from us, and speed away where rejoicing is without trembling, and *thanksgiving* is unmingled with tears."

TRUTH AND SINCERITY.

Nothing perhaps, is more beautiful, or more rare, than a character in which there is no guile. Guile insinuates into our hearts and conduct to a degree of which we are little aware. Many who would be shocked at an actual breach of truth, are notwithstanding, far from sincere in manner or conversation. The mode in which they speak of others, when absent, is wholly inconsistent with their professions to them, when present. They will relate a fact, not falsely, but leaning to that side which tells best for themselves; they represent their own actions in the fairest colors; they have an excuse ever ready for themselves, and too often at the expense of others. Such conduct, if not coming under the character of direct falsehood, is certainly a species of deceit to be severely condemned, and strictly guarded against, not only in ourselves, but in our children; for we shall find them early prone to art, and quick in imbibing it from others. It is not enough therefore, to speak the truth; our whole behavior to them should be sincere, upright, fair without artifice; and it is experience alone that can prove the excellent effects that will result from such a course of conduct; let all who are engaged in the care of children consider it a duty of primary, of essential importance, never to deceive them, never to employ cunning to gain their ends, or to spare trouble. Let them not for instance, to prevent a fit of crying, excite expectation of pleasure which they are certain cannot be procured; or assure a child that a medicine he must take is nice, when they know to the contrary. If a question be asked them, which they are unwilling or unable to answer, let them freely confess it, and beware of assuming power or knowledge which they do not possess, for all artifice is not only sinful, but is generally detected, even by children; and we shall experience the truth of the old proverb, "a cunning trick helps but once, and hinders ever after." No one who is not experimentally acquainted with children, would conceive how clearly they distinguish between truth and artifice; or how readily they adopt those equivocal expedients in their own behalf, which they perceive are practised against them.

LIBERAL LITERARY INSTITUTION.

AT CLINTON, N. Y.

The Preliminary Schools for the Winter, are now in successful progress. That for Young Gentlemen has already attained a sufficient number of scholars to justify its establishment, and the number is rapidly increasing. The School for Young Ladies was commenced November 21st, and is gradually receiving accession. The students in Geography and Astronomy particularly, will possess superior advantages, as they will receive lessons on the Globes, there being a pair of Wilson's thirteen inch Globes attached to the Institution. Those who purpose to give their patronage, should lose no time in entering their pupils. Board and Tuition on the most reasonable terms.

A bigot counteracts his Creator, makes God after man's image, and chooses the worst model he can find, himself.— *Warburton.*

A man should never be ashamed to own he has been in the wrong.

UNIVERSALIST BOOKS

FOR SALE AT THIS OFFICE.

Life of John Murray.
Winchester's Dialogues.
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Modern do. do.
Ballou on Atonement.
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120 Reasons for Universalism, by Paul Dean.
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